

REMARKS

Claims 9, 10, 12, 14, 15 and 16 are pending. No new matter has been added by way of the present amendment. For instance, each of claims 9, 10, 12 and 14 have been placed into independent format. Additionally, the dependency of claims 15 and 16 have been changed to depend upon each of claims 9, 10, 12 and 14. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

Applicants further submit that no new issues have been raised by way of the present submission which would require additional search and/or consideration on the part of the Examiner. For instance, claims 9, 10, 12 and 14 have simply been placed into independent format. Since the scope of these claims has already been searched and considered by the Examiner, the presentation of these claims into independent format does not place the burden of additional search and/or consideration on the part of the Examiner. Accordingly, no new issues have been raised.

In the event that the present submission does not place the application into condition for allowance, entry thereof is respectfully solicited as placing the application into better form for appeal.

In view of the following remarks Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and allow the currently pending claims.

Issue Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 8, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Scott (EP 295092). Applicants respectfully traverse. Applicants respectfully submit that the scope of the present claims has been limited to that of claims 9, 10, 12 and 14, which were indicated by the Examiner at pages 3 and 4 of the outstanding Office Action to be allowable. Accordingly, this rejection is moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

Issue Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 8, 11, 13 and 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Scott (EP 295092). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Similarly to the above, Applicants note that the subject matter of the present claims has been limited to that of claims 9, 10, 12 and 14, indicated by the Examiner to be allowable. Accordingly, this rejection is moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to withdraw all rejections and allow the currently pending claims.

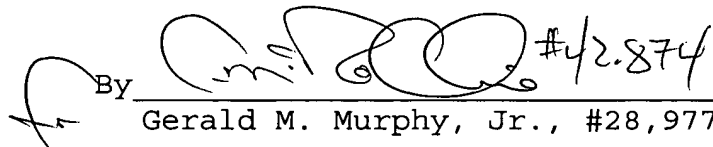
Conclusion

Should the Examiner should have any questions or comments, please contact Craig A. McRobbie (Reg. No. 42,874) at the office of Birch, Stewart, Kolasch & Birch, LLP.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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